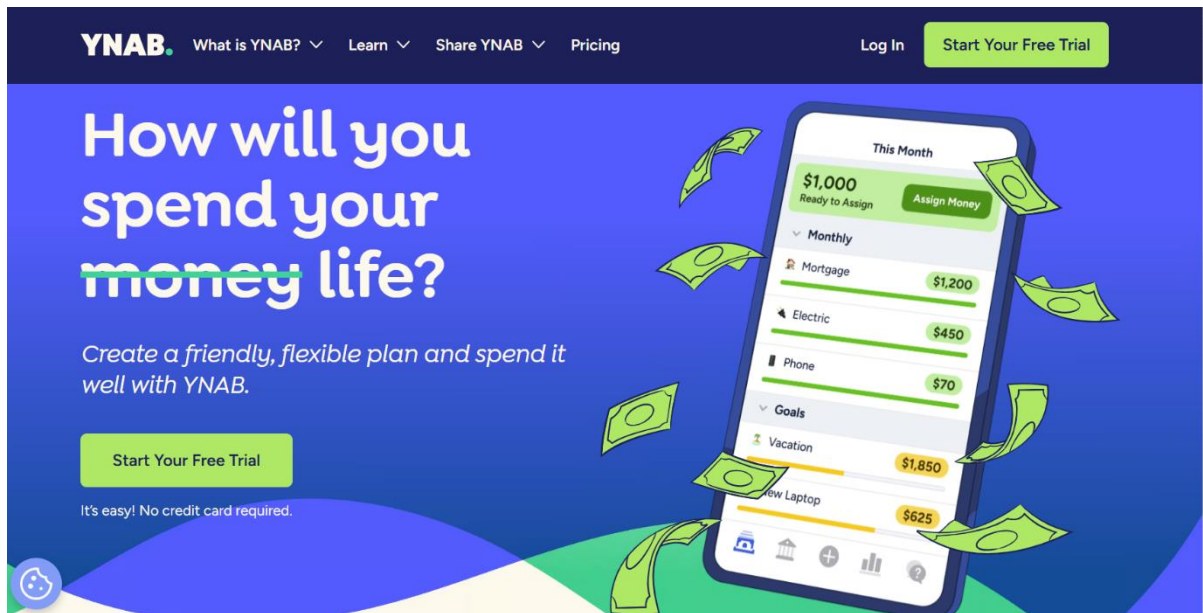


OPEN-SOURCE CODING BUDGET APPLICATION:

In a global economic struggle due to the cost of living going up but still having the same basic salary for numerous of years have affected fellow South-Africans and as we enter the new financial year, Things for South-Africans have only gotten worse with a tax increase of 0.5% from the previous. This means that the new tax rate is 15.5%. We have decided to create a simple yet efficient Personal Budget Tracker Application that will be used on a day-to-day basis from our customers. For the application to work efficiently and effectively we need to go Indepth of every existing budget tracker to show why our budget tracker is the best choice. Nowadays, budgeting apps are super important for anyone who wants to keep an eye on their spending. In this article, I'll talk about three popular budgeting apps: YNAB (You Need A Budget), Goodbudget, and Vault22, which was previously known as 22Seven by Old Mutual South Africa.

YNAB, short for You Need A Budget, is a well-liked budgeting app designed to assist users in adopting a zero-based budgeting method, where every dollar you have is given a specific job. The app focuses on proactive financial management by encouraging users to set aside money for different categories before their expenses arise.

Accessible through web browsers and available as mobile apps for iOS and Android devices, YNAB makes it easy for users to manage their budgets wherever they are, simplifying daily life. As we know with every application there are strengths that differentiate it from other applications and as well as their weaknesses that make the application difficult at times. The strengths of YNAB are as follow: **Educational Approach:** YNAB offers the user educational resources. **Community Support:** The application boost interaction between users by providing support groups that help each user with their difficulties. **Flexible Adjustments:** YNAB allows users to adjust their monthly budget depending on that specific month's debts and salary income. The weakness of YNAB are as follows: **Subscription Cost:** YNAB has a subscription as certain features will not work to its full potential dues to the subscription thus making the user engage in their free trail for specific days. **Age of Money:** YNAB introduces the concept of "aging" your money, encouraging users to spend money that is at least 30 days old, promoting financial buffer creation. **Direct Import:** The app can connect directly to bank accounts for transaction imports, reducing manual entry and enhancing accuracy. (McMullen & Pamela, 2025) , (Budget, 2013)



As we have stated what YNAB is and what functionalities it provides there is competition for it as any application does. Goodbudget is a budgeting application based on the envelope budgeting system, where users allocate funds into virtual envelopes for different spending categories. This method helps users control spending by limiting expenditures to the amounts designated in each envelope. Goodbudget is available on the web and offers mobile apps for iOS and Android devices. There may be an effect on whether you choose YNAB or Goodbudget but for that to happen we should name the strengths of using Goodbudget: **User-Friendly Interface:** The application offers an intuitive design, making it accessible for users with varying levels of tech-savviness. **Free Version Available:** Goodbudget offers a free version with essential features, making it accessible to users seeking cost-free budgeting tools, which in hand is better than going for YNAB as you need to subscribe first to access certain features that are already accessible when you use Goodbudget. **Educational Resources:** The app provides guides and articles to help users understand and implement effective budgeting strategies which is similar to the strengths of YNAB. As stated, before that every strength within an application there are some weaknesses that it faces on various inserts. The weaknesses of Goodbudget are as follows: **Manual Transaction Entry:** Unlike some competitors, Goodbudget requires manual entry of transactions, which can be time-consuming for users, more especially when the user may want to do a transaction at the very moment it may be required. **Limited Bank Integration:** The app does not offer direct bank account syncing, necessitating manual updates to reflect account balances accurately, which in-hand is as well as time-consuming for a user to

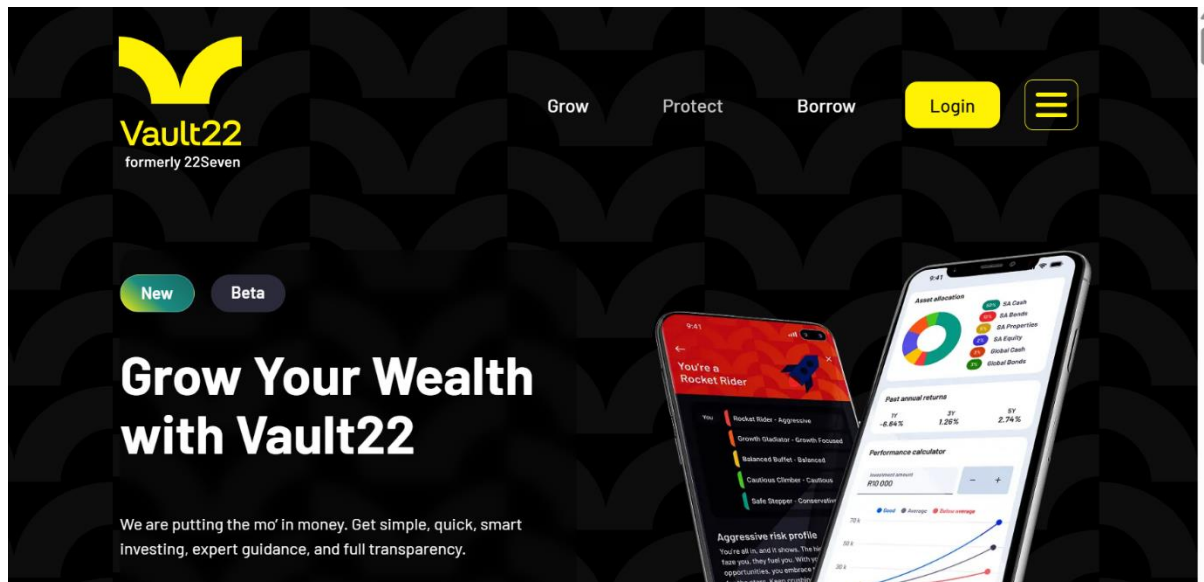
do. We as well need to discuss the key features that come with using Goodbudget as your daily-to-monthly budget tracker, they are as follows: **Debt Progress Report:** Goodbudget includes tools to track debt payoff progress, allowing users to visualize reductions in debt over time. **Income vs. Spending Report:** The app provides insights into income and spending trends, assisting users in maintaining a balanced budget more especially in the current economy as there needs to be a smart way of saving money without straining your monthly income and expenses. (Biberdorf, 2025), (McMullen & Pamela, 2025), (Partners, 2009)



The image shows the Goodbudget website landing page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: "How It Works", "What You Get", "The Goodbudget Way", "PRICING", "LOG IN", and "SIGN UP". The main heading is "Budget with a why" in green, followed by the tagline "Spend, save, and give toward what's important in life". A prominent purple button says "CREATE YOUR GOODBUDGET". Below this, it states "Budget tracking app available on" with Apple and Android logos. The central illustration depicts a woman on the left holding a smartphone that displays the Goodbudget app interface, which lists various budget categories like Groceries, Gas, Dining Out, etc., with corresponding amounts. On the right, a man is standing next to a shopping cart, and another person is behind a counter. The bottom section, titled "How it works", explains that Goodbudget is a budget tracker for the modern age, replacing paper envelopes with a virtual program that tracks spending with family and friends using the time-tested envelope budgeting method.

Vault22 is a personal financial management application developed by Old Mutual South Africa, aiming to enhance financial wellness among South Africans. The app offers tools for budgeting, debt management, and financial education, tailored to the local context. Vault22 is available for download on both iOS and Android platforms. The strengths and weaknesses of Vault22 are different from the rest as it is bound for usage in South-Africa and provides services depending on the South-African market. The strengths are as follows: **Localized Content:** Vault22 caters specifically to the South African market, offering relevant financial tools and information. **Integration with Old Mutual Services:** Users can access Old Mutual's financial products and services

directly through the app, providing a seamless experience. **Free Access:** Vault22 is available free of charge, making it accessible to a broad user base. The weaknesses of Vault22 are as follows: **Access Allocation:** Only users that have access to Vault22 are users with an Old Mutual Bank card as the service of Vault22 is only provided and available in their banking application. (Times, 2024) (Africa, 2024)



FEATURES	YNAB	GOODBUDGET	VAULT22
BUDGETING METHOD	Zero-Based Budgeting – Every dollar is assigned a job before spending.	Envelope Budgeting – Users allocate money into virtual envelopes for different spending categories.	Customizable Budgeting – Users can set budgets based on their preferences and financial needs.
BANK INTEGRATION	Yes (Direct Import – Connects to bank accounts for automatic transaction syncing).	No (Requires manual transaction entry).	Yes (Local bank integration for South African users).
PLATFORM AVAILABILITY	Web, iOS, Android.	Web, iOS, Android.	iOS, Android.
SUBSCRIPTION COST	Paid Subscription.	Free (Basic version) & Paid (Premium version).	Free.
BEST USAGE	Users looking for hands-on, detailed budgeting with strict financial planning.	Individuals or families who prefer a simple, envelope-style budgeting system.	South African users seeking an all-in-one budgeting and financial education tool.
KEY FEATURES	Zero-based budgeting. Real-time syncing across devices.	Envelope budgeting system. Debt progress tracking.	Full financial overview (bank accounts, credit cards, investments).
STRENGTHS	Advanced financial education resources.	Free version is available.	Tailored specifically for South African users.
WEAKNESSES	Subscription cost may be a barrier for usage.	No bank integration (manual entry required).	Limited availability outside of South Africa.

With all aspects from each application with its features being considered, there are a selection of features from the three applications that i want to feature on the creation of my own budget tracking application called **CASOAS BUDGET TRACK**. For the budgeting method, Vault22 is convient for my application as it will allow users of the application to set their own budgeting style based on a users personal monthly needs. For financial tracking and automation, I have opted to use real-time syncing used by YNAB to keep budget data upgraded on multiple devices that a user may need and use the assistance of direct bank integration which is also in connection to YNAB as it automatically syncs tractions to reduce manual input of transactions individually. The goal-oriented feature is one that makes the application more fun to interact with and I have chosen to use goal-tracking which is used by YNAB, it lets users set savings and debt repayment goals as it will give users motivation in tracking their monthly expenses in a positive way. User engagement is important for any application as this is where you will give feedback for a user as to how they may need to improve their budgeting technics by creating financial literacy content where you provide guides and articles for better insight on financial knowledge that will improve your budget health.

With all the aspects of each application detailed and considered, the creation of COASOS BUDGET TRACKER will be in integration with features from YNAB, GOODBUDGET & VAULT22 that will make the application simplistic and functional for the user to use. The purpose of the creation of this application will be done through phases and a prototype will be created as well.

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